Table of Contents

IMPROVING LEARNING AND LITERACY IN ABBOTT CLASSROOMS

New Jersey Department of Education
Improving Learning and Literacy in Abbott Classrooms

INTRODUCTION

Focus on what works and "classroom out" thinking and planning. This document will guide the work of Abbott schools and districts during this school year for the preparation of plans and budgets for the 2004-05 school year **based on the Three-year Operational Plans the schools submitted in July 2003.**. This guidance builds on the regulations promulgated by the Commissioner on September 9, 2003 (*N.J.A.C.* 6A:10A). The changes this year are evolutionary, not radical. You will notice a combined focus on literacy, math, and mastery of the Core Curriculum Content Standards (CCCS) as the criteria that will determine school and district plans and budgets for next year. Such focus is what is meant by "classroom out" thinking—how well students are learning, what explains their progress and problems, what actions we propose to ensure ambitious improvement in student achievement, and what specific targets we have set to meet the goal this year, next year and the year after. These questions will be at the core of classroom, school, district, and Department of Education (DOE) efforts this year. As school and district budgets are prepared, submitted, and reviewed, requests for supplemental funds will be judged on the connections between current and proposed programs and improved literacy and mastery of the CCCS.

Three objectives or standards drive the work we ask you to undertake. First, the evaluation and planning outlined has a single measurement -- how well or poorly students perform academically. Therefore, we ask that every teacher in every school reaffirm the professional commitment to be a central part of the examination of student work. "Classroom out" assessments mean that the most likely answer to problems with student achievement will be found in improved instructional practices, more tailored support for teachers, continuous attention to, and discussion of, student work, a coherent curriculum closely aligned with the CCCS and continuous assessment of the evidence such as grades, writing samples, quizzes, and other performance measures.

In your planning and in our review, we will be looking at the performance of all students. The New Jersey Supreme Court's Abbott decisions included no specific remedies for English Language Learners and classified students, even though these two student categories now constitute almost half of all Abbott students. The federal *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) *Act* requires that these students and other subgroups be accorded the same status as "general education" students -- so too with Abbott students.

Please note that a new student category will be reported this year. With NCLB's ten subgroups that must be assessed, one would think that there is enough disaggregated information. However, to be fairer to schools and districts, we are asking that separate reports be filed for all students who have been continuously enrolled for three years or more. Called "continuously enrolled students" or "CES," this report will permit more comparisons across schools and districts for students who have been exposed to the district's reform, programs and practices for a significant amount of time.

Second, the work you must do to comply with Abbott is almost completely consistent with the requirements for *NCLB*. In fact, schools and districts that submitted "approvable" applications for federal funding on September 30, 2003 will see that much of the data collection, evaluation, and planning for improving teaching and learning will have already been completed. Again, both NCLB and Abbott give highest priority to improved student performance in achieving high standards for all students.

Third, the process of school-by-school assessment of student progress will work only if everyone is candid about how well students are doing, what is holding them back, and what needs to be done to improve instruction and learning. Therefore, while each teacher is asked to complete the checklist that follows and to discuss it with faculty colleagues, none of these documents will be shared with either the district or the DOE. We will ask for a certification of the process that was used to reach conclusions, but not the content of the individual teacher evaluations.

By the time you receive this document, schools and their newly-christened "School Leadership Councils" (formerly School Management and Improvement Teams) will have fewer than two months to collect and analyze much more detailed student data than was required last year; review and draw conclusions from last year's academic results; determine effective current and proposed instructional responses; and prepare a school budget and revised School Three-year Operational Plan.

The district central office faces equally daunting deadlines. By November 15, 2003, the department will have completed face-to-face discussions with all 30 Abbott districts regarding their Three-year Operational Plans submitted this summer, how the 2002-03 test results might affect those plans, and whether they agree on the revisions and implications of the plan on next year's budget and instructional support programs. Then, districts must review all the school budgets and revise their own three-year plans by February 2, 2004. As with the school plans, almost all the work required of the central office is also needed for NCLB.

Finally, a word on the department's heavy emphasis on early literacy. We know based on research that students who do not become strong readers by the end of third grade have only a one in ten chance of ever reading on grade level. New Jersey is the first state to put together the combination of policies, including the opportunity for a high-quality preschool education followed by a literacy-rich curriculum in small classes, with adequate funding to enhance early literacy. Moreover, we know that dramatic improvements in literacy skills is possible because it is already happening in some Abbott districts with high concentrations of low-income students. Where children are strong readers by the end of third grade, they relish school and do much better in middle and high school. Hence, the urgent tone about early literacy.

> *Districts using EdSolution services may submit their forms and charts for the revised plan online. With online submission, one hard copy must be submitted to their respective Office of Program Planning and Design (OPPD) regional office. Teacher checklists can be completed anonymously online via EdSolution or any other provider used by the district. Schools using other providers or an internal system must submit one paper copy and an electronic version of their forms and charts to their respective OPPD regional office.*

IMPROVING LITERACY AND LEARNING
IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

Providing Evidence of Student Work and Performance to Guide Plans and Budgets

"Classroom out" is the organizing idea for revising the three-year plan and preparing the 2004-05 school budget. This means, simply, that the criterion for planning and budgeting is a deep assessment of student achievement and what can be done to improve it. In previous years, equal attention was given to a list of possible programs, services, and positions, some of which were considered mandatory, while others were authorized by Abbott. Now, schools must begin with a profile of how students have performed and what best explains their achievement or lack thereof, something every teacher must help construct. The most likely solutions for inadequate student performance are to be found in the recruitment and support for qualified teachers and well-prepared principals in each school, the implementation of a coherent curriculum that is closely aligned with the CCCS, and the constant review of the evidence as to how all these elements are working.

Only after a school's instructional and curricular practices have been evaluated and changes for their improvement proposed should schools and districts look to other noninstructional explanations and solutions for improved student achievement. **Schools and districts should reference the Chart of Supplemental Programs and Services found in the appendix to N.J.A.C. 6A:10A once they have completed this analysis.**

This rigorous evaluation of student academic achievement is the foundation of the revised school and district operational plans and the 2004-05 budget request.

Collecting and analyzing the evidence is the essential first step. Here, the central office should assist each school to assemble and analyze the required data. "Data" can be a daunting term, and many of us are not confident when we're asked to evaluate lots of numbers. "Data-driven instruction" is a hot topic among educators, but it could end up like other pedagogical fads — great expectations and low-to-no delivery of results. NCLB already requires that districts and the DOE report on how well all students are doing, including classified, English Language Learners (ELLs), African-American, Latino, and low-income students. When these subgroups don't perform adequately on state tests, a school can find itself categorized as "in need of improvement." Almost all the evidence DOE is asking each school to report should have already been reported for NCLB.

One new subgroup that schools and districts must report comprises those students who have been continuously enrolled for at least three years, a category called "continuously enrolled students" or "CES." CES will take away the unfairness of reporting results for students who only recently enrolled in a school or district. Districts must report those students who have been continuously enrolled in the district, but not the same school, for three years. Applications for supplemental aid will not be considered by DOE until the district has provided complete reports of CES.

Here is the information each elementary school will display on an Excel spreadsheet that DOE has prepared, an Access database, or its own form:

- Enrollments from the Application for State School Aid (ASSA) for each year 1999 through 2003 by grade;
- The total number of students who took the Elementary School Proficiency Assessment (ESPA) or New Jersey Assessment of Skills and Knowledge 4 (NJASK4) in each year 1999 through 2003 by category: general education, English Language Learners (ELLs), Special Education (SPED) and again for CES (a subset of the prior categories);
- Results for each year by student subgroup (e.g., ELL, SPED, African-American, Latino, free lunch eligible, white, Asian) by proficient, advanced proficient and partially proficient **and** by the mean scaled score for each year and each subtest; and
- The results reported in the same way for any standardized norm-referenced tests used for the K-3 and fifth grades by year and by student category. Please indicate the test version being reported (e.g., TerraNova Custom).

While this is a lot of data to collect, organize, and evaluate, no credible assessment of student learning can take place without them, and most of them have been already collected for NCLB. Schools or districts that want to "drill down" to mine richer data to produce better-informed decisions might consider the following:

- How many of your kindergarten students attended Abbott preschool programs, how many attended non-Abbott programs, and how many attended no programs? Are there any measurable differences in how well-prepared students from the various programs are for kindergarten?
- How well do students who have exited the ELL program perform on state and other assessments? Is there any difference among students who were in dual language programs versus those in English-only or ESL programs?
- How well have students with disabilities performed on NJASK4 when viewed by disability? What percentage exceeded the average statewide cluster scores? Are there differences in performance among students who are in self-contained classrooms versus those receiving in-class support versus those in resource rooms?

Of course, there are many factors that may influence learning that are not strictly statistical, such as a change in whole school reform (WSR) model or curriculum, high teacher turnover, new leadership, or rapid changes in the demographics of the student body. These factors will be addressed in the body of the School Three-year Plan.

Assessing student needs means continuous judgment. While it is possible that the answers to what is holding students back might leap out from the collected evidence, it is far more likely that careful review, discussion and judgment are necessary. This process should be led by the principal and involve every teacher, the central office and the School Leadership Council (SLC). The place to start is to identify those problems that are best explained by policies and practices at the **district** level, those that are at the **school** level, and those at the **grade** or **classroom** level.

The following checklists are to help focus the search for both the diagnosis of, and prescriptions for, obstacles to student mastery of the CCCS. You will notice that there are separate checklists for literacy and math. These are not "tests," or compliance documents. The checklists are not comprehensive. They are merely a starting point. The school should tailor the assessment to the unique needs of its students. In assessing needs, the school should also consider the needs of special education and English Language Learners, as well as those programs, services and positions that the students may require in order to read at grade level by the end of third grade and to master the NJCCCS at every grade level.

To encourage candor, individual teacher checklists are not to be shared with the central office or DOE. They should be filled out by all teachers, discussed by teachers in grade-level meetings, and then in full faculty meetings with the principal. After teachers have completed the forms and held their discussions, the summaries should be reviewed by the SLC and principal to produce a single, school-wide assessment. Where a "no" is checked, a narrative response should be prepared.

Intensive Early Literacy and Mathematics
in Elementary Schools Checklist
2004-05

Intensive Early Literacy	Yes	No
1. The DOE's Intensive Early Literacy model has been implemented in all K-3 classrooms as evidenced by:		
• A comprehensive reading program that includes all the components of "scientific-based reading research:" Motivation and background knowledge, phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension.		
• An uninterrupted literacy block of at least 90 minutes daily.		
• Read-alouds to the whole class occur at least once daily.		
• The use of small learning centers that are clearly delineated for at least reading, computers and writing.		
• A classroom library with at least 300 books that are aligned to the CCCS and the school's comprehensive reading program..		
• A classroom library that includes books and assistive materials for special education, bilingual, and other students, as appropriate.		
2. The curriculum developed by the district (or by the school, if applicable) is fully aligned with the NJ CCCS with citations of the connections to specific standards.		
• The curriculum for kindergarten is fully aligned with the district's preschool curriculum.		
• The curriculum is based on eight-week units and includes benchmarks for measuring progress through the period.		
• Teachers are given professional development to become acquainted with curriculum changes, to upgrade their content mastery when necessary, and to explore with their colleagues effective means to teach the curriculum.		
3. Technology is fully integrated into the instructional practice of all classrooms.		
• Classroom computers are adequate in number and are configured as a learning center.		
• Computers are networked, connected to the Internet, and have sufficient broadband to permit individualized student use.		
• Teachers receive the assistance they need to employ computers in instruction and they're used daily.		
• Instructional software was selected because of its effectiveness and its alignment with the comprehensive reading program and CCCS.		
4. Assessment of student work is continuous, measured, and set against curricular and instructional standards that are clear, specific, and known by all teachers.		
• A consistent practice is to seek family literacy backgrounds in		

Intensive Early Literacy	Yes	No
terms of the language spoken at home and the parent's education level, particularly for ELL students.		
• The district uses standardized tests in kindergarten, first and second grades that permit cluster and item analysis to aid instruction.		
• The district curriculum provides interim assessments that teachers use to gauge progress against clear benchmarks.		
• Deeper assessments are used for students who are falling behind.		
• Accommodations are made for ELL and special education students.		
• Assessment results are shared with, and explained to, teachers, parents, students, the central office and SLC members.		
• A cluster analysis has been completed of the NJASK4 results.		
5. The school expects, 95 percent of its students to be readers.		
• At least 75 percent of the school's students can read at grade level by the end of first grade.		
• ELLs are carefully assessed and placed according to their dominant language into English only, ESL or native language-English programs.		
• Dual language classes are available for students with a strong background in their native language.		
• Inclusion is achieved by maximizing "in-class" instruction with SPED teachers or SPED-certified general classroom teachers.		
• The WSR model is fully compatible with the model for Intensive Early Literacy.		
• The school exchanges visits with preschool programs whose "graduates" attend the school's kindergarten and the school receives information on student work and the preschool curriculum.		
• Title I is integrated into the general classroom and its instruction and student support is fully coordinated with classroom teachers.		

Intensive Early Mathematics	Yes	No
1. The district curriculum is aligned with the NJ CCCS with citations of the connections to specific standards and Cumulative Progress Indicators (CPIs).		
• Students work in a variety of groupings, including in math centers, with instruction targeted at meeting or exceeding the NJCCCS and on the assessed needs of students in relationship to the standards.		
• The school implements a mathematics program that emphasizes the development of mathematical thinking and building meaning.		
• Students are required to communicate about mathematics, both		

Intensive Early Mathematics	Yes	No
orally and in writing, to explain their reasoning and to make connections among mathematical strands and the real world.		
• The mathematics curriculum for kindergarten is aligned with the district's preschool curriculum.		
• The district assures that mathematics print materials, instructional software, and manipulative materials are aligned with the CCCS and the five standards (the four content standards—Number and Numerical Operations, Geometry and Measurement, Patterns and Algebra, and Data Analysis, Probability, and Discrete Mathematics -- and the Mathematical Processes Standard).		
• The curriculum includes multiple assessment and benchmarks for measuring progress through each content and process strand.		
• Learning styles: Students are offered choices of real life, auditory, visual, and kinesthetic applications of mathematics skills and concepts within each cluster.		
• Math across the curriculum: Students apply mathematics within each cluster and in other subjects: social studies, language arts, science, technology, art, music and physical education.		
• Students are given regular opportunities to manipulate objects and models to represent mathematical concepts.		
• Teachers are given professional development time to become acquainted with curriculum changes; to upgrade their content mastery when necessary; to use data to differentiate instruction for groups of students within their classrooms; to plan cross-curricular mathematics applications; and to explore effective means to differentiate the curriculum based on students' needs and learning styles.		
2. Mathematics is integrated into technology in classrooms and in computer labs.		
• Software is selected because of its alignment with NJCCS at each grade level.		
• Technology applications do not reduce time required for mathematics instruction.		
• Technology provides experiences for advanced levels of critical thinking, simulation and application of skills. See http://www.doe.mass.edu/edtech/etreport/1998/milken.html		

From evidence to improved instruction and learning. The principal will lead the School Leadership Council and the entire faculty in mapping improved instruction. The revised School Three-year Operational Plan and 2004-05 school budget must be submitted by December 12, 2003 to the district central office and to the department on January 8, 2004. October and November should be a time of intense scrutiny and discussion about the evidence of student performance. Since the Elementary School Proficiency Assessment (ESPA) results from 1999-2002 will have been included in the School Three-year Operational Plan, the New Jersey Assessment of Skills and Knowledge 4 (NJASK4) results for 2003 should be closely evaluated to see how they fit with 1999-2002 ESPA results by subgroup. In reviewing these results or those of any other grades, it is important to consider possible explanations for standardized test results for both strong and inadequate performance:

- Did all fourth-grade classrooms perform poorly on the same clusters? Or did all classrooms perform well on language arts, but not math or vice versa? Did other schools display the same patterns? If "yes," then one should determine if the curriculum is really aligned with the NJ CCCS for those clusters or subtests with poor performance across the board. This should be a topic of discussion with the central office, as it bears chief responsibility for producing a coherent and aligned curriculum.

- If there is a clear literacy or math problem, then the problem may be in curricular or instructional practices in earlier grades. Here the continuously enrolled students (CES) cohort may be a particularly valuable source of explanation. Using whatever national, district, or school assessments are available, the team should work backward from the fourth grade to kindergarten to see if there is a clear grade-level breakdown in reading progress. A grade-level problem may suggest that curriculum isn't aligned with the CCCS or that teachers, individually and/or collectively, need professional development. If nothing else credibly explains the problem, the school's comprehensive reading program should be scrutinized.

- If not a school-wide problem, is there a classroom-level explanation? There may be one or a few teachers in one or more grade levels who need more tailored assistance with content, good practices, or greater support. Such needs should be specifically identified and included in their Professional Improvement Plans (PIPs).

- If the rate of improvement is not strong over the past three or four years, then it is essential to examine programs, positions, and services that have been in place during the same time. Are computers in place but not tied in to daily classroom instruction? Is software directly connected to the comprehensive reading program and district curriculum? Does the parent liaison program connect parents directly to classroom work of their children and what is the evidence for the connection? How is the work of the Family Support Team determined? What contributions is the whole school reform (WSR) model making to student achievement and teacher support that can be documented?

- If English Language Learners (ELLs), low-income students, and special education (SPED) students are not making acceptable progress as measured by NCLB, the level of integration of all instructional resources should be examined. One indicator is whether there is a wall between "general education" and other students. For example, do SPED, Title I or English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers pull out their students or do they work along with the classroom teacher in small-group instruction? If the former, the school should consider what progress can be made towards the goal of integrated and inclusive team-teaching and what assistance teachers may need this year to begin that process.

There are four Abbott-specific requirements that must be included in the evaluation leading up to a revised school plan: WSR, the School Leadership Council, technology, and supplemental services.

Whole School Reform. It is presumed that Abbott elementary schools will retain a contract with a DOE-approved national WSR model, either the first model implemented or another one identified as more suitable to student needs. All schools should have completed a detailed evaluation of the contributions and limitations of its model in spring 2003. Any elementary school that has documented that its WSR model is not contributing to improved student achievement may apply to switch to another DOE-approved model. The standards for such a switch include evidence that a good-faith effort to implement the original model was made and that the model made no observable contribution to improved achievement. Schools seeking to switch among department-approved models should send a letter-application to their Chief School Administrator (CSA) and the Commissioner, following section B in the Alternative Whole School Reform Design application.

Schools in the following four categories may, under certain circumstances, choose to develop their own design in conjunction with their central offices:

1. Low-performing schools as defined at *N.J.A.C.* 6A:10A-3.3(e) in which 50 percent or more of the general education students did not attain proficiency on the 2002 Elementary School Proficiency Assessment Language Arts Literacy (ESPA LAL) subtest. In these cases, the performance assessment team assigned to the school may recommend a shift from the current developer to another DOE-approved WSR model or to an alternative WSR design generated by the school or district.

2. High-performing schools which are schools in which the percentage of general education students attaining proficiency on the 2002 ESPA LAL subtest exceeds the statewide proficiency level percentage. Such schools may shift models or implement an alternative WSR design.

3. Schools that did not have a WSR contract in 2002-03 are expected to contract with its WSR model from 2001-02, unless the school/SLC can demonstrate to the Commissioner that its original developer cannot meet the instructional needs of the school, in which case, a different WSR model or an alternative WSR design may be approved.

4. Schools that file a complaint with the Commissioner documenting that its WSR developer is not performing satisfactorily under the terms of its contract may, if the Commissioner determines that satisfactory performance by the developer is not feasible, explore the same options as schools in numbers two and three above.

Schools in categories 2-4, with the superintendent's approval, may apply to the Commissioner for approval to establish an Alternative Whole School Reform Design. Such applications should use Form B, which can be found in the application for an alternative WSR design.

All other elementary schools not in categories 1-4 will continue implementation of a DOE-approved WSR model (usually its current model). With the increased focus on "classroom out" planning and budgeting, it is especially important that the developer assist with the deeper assessment of student achievement and the evaluation of effective instructional practices. On the other hand, if a developer has been in the school for three years or more under a contract that promises improved student achievement that has not been realized, then the school should consider whether there is a problem with the WSR developer's performance under the terms of the contract and a complaint should be filed with the Commissioner per #4 above, or should determine whether the model cannot meet the school's instructional needs and another approved model should be adopted.

School Leadership Council. Abbott schools are distinguished by their use of a school-based body to advise on essential instructional, budgeting, and other issues. Newly named this year to more accurately reflect its intended role, the SLC works with the principal to assess and improve the instructional culture of the school. Its purpose is not to implement programs or manage the school. The SLC should also serve as the "school improvement plan committee" required by NCLB. As an integral part of the school community, the SLC should conduct a self-assessment this year as a part of its revisions to the School Three-year Operational Plan. Among the questions it should consider are the following:

- Is the SLC active and effective? Does it meet at least monthly? Does it communicate frequently and effectively with parents, teachers, and the community?
- Is the SLC representative? Have the teachers, noninstructional staff members, and parents been given a free voice in selecting their representatives on the council?
- Does it work well with the principal? The SLC is to offer advice and recommendations to the principal and central office on issues that influence the educational life of the school including, most importantly, the school-based budget, which it must adopt by a majority vote.
- Has the SLC voted to participate in personnel actions and completed the district training on personnel policies and procedures?
- Do all SLC members participate in the assessment of student achievement and the proposals to improve educational practices including setting specific annual goals for improvement? Do professional educators and parent and community representatives work well together?

The SLC from elementary, middle and high schools must approve revisions to the School Three-year Operational Plan as must the faculty in a separate vote.

Technology and instruction. Since the *Abbott V* decision in 1998, Abbott schools have benefited from a significant investment in educational hard/software. Most schools have achieved the Court-mandated ratio of at least one computer to five students, are wired for the Internet, and have technology coordinators to provide classroom assistance. The plan should explain whether technology is integrated into the instructional life of students and teachers. Here, the grade-level and faculty conversation about the checklist should be particularly helpful in determining whether computers are an integral part of teaching and learning, or if they are used primarily as a student diversion, or hardly used at all.

Supplemental services. Supplemental services are used in at least three different ways for Abbott and NCLB purposes. NCLB uses the term to describe services that must be made available by "schools in need of improvement" to parents for tutoring and other supplemental help. In *Abbott V*, the NJ Supreme Court described a range of educational and other remedies that were mandated, authorized, or noted. For example, preschool for three- and four-year-olds, full-day kindergarten, and class size reduction by grade level were called "supplemental" by the court in *Abbott III*, but are, in fact, mandated in *Abbott V*. Other services such as after-school programs or in-school health clinics were authorized if the school or district could document that the program, position, or service would contribute to improved student achievement.

For the purposes of revising the School Three-year Operational Plan and submitting the 2004-05 budget, supplemental services refer to those programs or services that are <u>documented to be essential for the achievement of literacy and mastery of the CCCS</u>. It is to be expected that not all obstacles to student achievement will be overcome by a single set of practices and programs in every Abbott school. It is possible that clusters of students will present unusual and unanticipated problems that prevent them from achieving early literacy or mastering the CCCS even with exposure to a rich instructional culture. Such examples must be fully documented, and proposed solutions must demonstrate potential effectiveness in improving student achievement.

As a part of the review of programs, positions, and services that are contributing or not to improved student achievement, schools must report separately on any consultants, vendors, WSR models, or providers that have worked at the school for the last three years or more. The premise of this requirement is that three years should be an adequate period for the expertise, philosophy, or technical capacity of the vendor to be absorbed by the school's staff. As a part of its revised three-year plan, the school should provide the evidence of the effectiveness of any provider or consultant being used beyond three years.

Revising the School Three-year Operational Plan

It is essential that the School Leadership Council (SLC) plan for the years 2004-05 and beyond document the evidence for the diagnosis of student performance and the revisions proposed to improve it. The revised plan should be consistent with the plans submitted for NCLB and include <u>specific</u> goals for improved student achievement that are simultaneously ambitious and credible. The goals should be tied directly to the evaluation of longitudinal and disaggregated student achievement results collected on the DOE's Excel spreadsheet, Access database, or the school's own form.

Here again, the consolidated federal funding application should provide each school, particularly those "in need of improvement," with the framework for revising the three-year plan. Specifically, the NCLB needs assessment, the school improvement plan, and the NCLB performance goals and indicators fit precisely into what is required for Abbott.

The federal needs assessment includes for a detailed checklist to report the performance of every *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) subgroup on state tests. Since the Consolidated application was due before NJASK4 results were available, each school should update its NCLB analysis to include the 2003 results. The NJASK4 results include a "cluster" report that permits a school to determine the performance of students by the skills tested on both language arts and math. Moreover, schools will benefit from using the federal matrix to analyze the results of standardized national or district assessments in grades other than the fourth, so that a clearer pattern of grade-by-grade, subgroup-by-subgroup performance emerges. The results of this assessment should be shared with parents and the school so that everyone knows what instructional problems need attention.

The NCLB <u>school improvement plan</u> is the bridge between past performance (i.e. needs assessment) and this year's priorities for improved instructional focus and practice. Each school must not only connect the longitudinal test results broken down for subgroups to specific, research-based improvements, but must also address the collective and individual needs of teachers and prescribe professional development to strengthen teacher performance. NCLB requires the district and schools to work together to better inform parents and involve them in the academic work of their children.

The revisions of the School Three-year Operational Plan for 2004-05 school year must include <u>precise goals and indicators</u> for how far the school will go in closing the achievement gaps in math and language arts literacy (LAL). Here the format required for NCLB can be used for Abbott's revised plan with the first four goals applicable to elementary schools. Working with the district, each school must indicate its current status and set ambitious but achievable goals for 2004-05 with respect to the following:

1. The performance and goals for all students and each subgroup in attaining proficiency in language arts and math;
2. The performance by English Language Learners, by number of years in bilingual and/or ESL programs, in achieving English proficiency and the number who will do so by the end of this school year;
3. The percentage of classrooms taught by "highly qualified teachers" as defined by New Jersey for compliance with NCLB; and
4. The achievement of learning environments that are safe, drug-free, and conducive to learning.

Charts A, B, and C in the final section must be used to outline the assessment results, performance targets, learning deficiencies/obstacles, and strategies/solutions for the 2004-05 school year.

INCREASING MASTERY OF THE CORE CURRICULUM CONTENT STANDARDS IN MIDDLE SCHOOLS

Background. In July of this year, Abbott middle schools submitted their first three-year plans, which were to be focused on the adoption and implementation of Whole School Reform models, if applicable, and on curriculum and instruction. In the meantime, schools were to submit their NCLB plans and goals for the current school year on September 30, 2003. If those plans were prepared with broad participation of the faculty and school community and all the reports and analyses were faithfully completed, then much of the background required for this year's revisions to the Abbott three-year plans and preparation of the 2004-05 school budgets will be readily available.

NCLB's second year.   NCLB has spotlighted student achievement in the nation's public schools. By introducing ten subgroups whose progress on state tests must be measured and reported, NCLB has accelerated attention to Abbott's goal: to give every student a credible chance to master New Jersey's demanding CCCS and to make every third grader a strong reader. NCLB is particularly helpful in focusing on the needs of English Language Learners (ELL) and students classified as disabled (SPED), two groups that represent almost a majority of Abbott students, but whose needs were not addressed with specific remedies in the Abbott decisions.

The department has made every effort to incorporate NCLB procedures, standards, deadlines, and reports into those for Abbott. For example, any middle school now categorized as "in need of improvement" must produce an evaluation for NCLB of student performance going back three years for each subgroup, a school improvement plan, and a specific set of goals and indicators of progress for this school year. Each of these steps fits in with the revisions required for the Abbott three-year operational plan.

"Classroom out" assessment and planning

Improving student achievement is the criterion to be used for evaluating and planning the school's work for this and the next two years and for preparing the school-based budget. This year's planning begins with a careful assessment of how students have performed on state, district or national standardized tests in a school over the past three or four years. This review should be broken out by the NCLB subcategories and by a new category that will depict performance for students who have been continuously enrolled in your school for at least three years, called "CES" for "continuously enrolled student."   DOE has prepared an Excel spreadsheet to assist with the collection of the required information, but an Access database can be created, or the school can devise its own form, as long as the same information is reported.

Student achievement data are the beginning point in assessing how well students are learning, what obstacles stand in their way to improved performance, what steps the school will take to eliminate or lower those obstacles, what specific goals are set for improvement this year and for the next two years, and how that progress will be measured. The foregoing list defines the task ahead for every school to be completed by December 12, 2003 when plans and a school budget are submitted to the central office. The plans and budgets are due to the department on January 8,

2004. This will require that the 2003 Grade Eight Proficiency Assessment (GEPA) scores be included and evaluated.

Remember, the most likely solutions for inadequate student performance are to be found in the recruitment and support for qualified teachers and well-prepared principals, the implementation of a coherent curriculum that is closely aligned with the CCCS, and the constant review of the evidence as to how all these elements are working. These are the teaching and learning issues that should be addressed in October and November by all teachers, the principal and the SLC working together.

Because the classroom is the focus of this year's evaluation and planning, we ask that every teacher complete a checklist. These forms are not to be turned in to the central office or DOE. They are designed to encourage discussion among teachers and principals to enrich the assessment and planning process. Once completed, we ask teachers at the same grade level or in the same department to meet and compare their responses. We also ask that the same be done in a faculty meeting of all teachers and the principal. Once these meetings have been held, the principal should share the consolidated results with the SLC to help prepare the revisions to the current three-year plan.

The goal of this teacher survey is not to achieve consensus, nor to place blame or point fingers. Instead, the goal is to stimulate a very focused and frank conversation among the educators who are directly responsible for, and knowledgeable about, how well students are working and achieving. Candor and forthrightness are obviously required for this process to work.

The evidence of student achievement. Middle or K-8 schools will begin with the evidence already reported for NCLB for student performance on the Grade Eight Proficiency Assessment (GEPA) for the years 1999-2000 through 2001-02 by subgroup and continuously enrolled students (CES). For this analysis, the school may use the Excel spreadsheet prepared by the DOE, an Access database, or its own form. These results should be updated with the 2003 GEPA results. Whichever is used, the following should be displayed:

- Enrollments from the Application for State School Aid (ASSA) by grade for each year from 1999 through 2003;
- The GEPA performance by subtest and by NCLB subgroups for each year 1999 through 2003 both by percentage proficient and mean scale score; and
- The 2003 GEPA scores by subtest for all eighth-grade students who had been continuously enrolled in the school for at least three years.

These numbers are essential to a sensible review of student performance.   There are other indicators that may be available for analysis that the School Leadership Council (SLC) may want to investigate to gain a clearer picture of how well the school is achieving. For example, the performance of former English Language Learners (ELLs) students who exited in 2002 or earlier and took the GEPA as a "general" student can be reviewed against the performance of current ELL students and/or other general students. The mean scale scores of disabled students can be plotted by disability and cluster and contrasted with the statewide averages for all students. The more data that are reviewed, the richer the school profile will be.

Teacher's Review of Instruction and Learning

Checklist for Middle Schools

	Yes	No
Expectations		
• High expectations for all students and faculty are a part of our school culture and include academic work from the college preparatory curriculum for all students.		
• The curriculum makes very clear what teachers are expected to cover in their course(s), both as to content and skills.		
• Students are told what is expected of them for each term, unit, test, or assignment, and they are given frequent chances to attain the goals set.		
• The number of students taught is manageable and permits careful reviews of each student's work.		
Curriculum and instructional materials		
• The teacher knows the NJ Core Content Curriculum Standards		
• The curriculum is carefully aligned to the CCCS so that curricular goals and benchmarks to specific CCCS can be tracked.		
• If a textbook is used, it is one that is aligned to the CCCS and is supplemented with accessible and aligned instructional materials.		
• The curriculum allows the teacher and students to know how well they are doing in mastering standards in a timely way, so that extra attention can be given to those falling behind.		
• The school leadership and central office help the teacher when the <u>content</u> of the curriculum is unfamiliar or difficult for teachers and their colleagues.		
Professional respect		
• Teachers are given time, at least once weekly, to work with colleagues at grade or department level to share effective practices and discuss individual students.		
• Teachers from his or her grade or content area were involved in writing the district/school curriculum.		
• Professional development is given a high priority and is tailored to problems in the classroom, grade or department, and school.		
• The performance evaluation is based on adequate observation,		

	Yes	No
is constructive in tone, timely, and fair.		
• The school/district has a responsive and sensible way to deal with problems that arise with computers in the classrooms or labs; software is effective, aligned with the CCCS and the district curriculum, and useful to teachers in daily teaching.		
Literacy and writing		
• Beyond textbooks and anthologies, students read widely from authentic text that is both age-appropriate and challenging.		
• Students read what they write and write about what they read.		
• Student writing samples that cover a wide range of assignments are planned, revised and published when the specific purpose of the assignment/writing is achieved (process writing).		
• Students write for a variety of purposes and audiences including literary response persuasive/argumentative, expository, poetry,etc., (GEPA tasks).		
• Students author books appropriate to their age and literacy experiences.		
• English Language Learners receive effective instruction geared to their literacy in their native language.		
Math		
• The school implements a mathematics program that emphasizes the development of mathematical thinking and building meaning.		
• The curriculum includes multiple assessment and benchmarks for measuring progress through each content and process strand.		
• The district assures that mathematics print materials, instructional software, and manipulative materials are aligned with the CCCS in Mathematics (the four content standards—Number and Numerical Operations, Geometry and Measurement, Patterns and Algebra, and Data Analysis, Probability, and Discrete Mathematics—and the Mathematical Processes standard).		
• Students are required to communicate about mathematics, both orally and in writing, to explain their reasoning and to make connections among mathematical strands and the real world.		
• Students are given regular opportunities to manipulate objects and models to represent mathematical concepts.		
• Students work in a variety of groupings with instruction targeted at meeting or exceeding the NJ CCCS and on the		

	Yes	No
assessed needs of students in relationship to the standards.		
• Learning styles: students are offered choices of real life, auditory, visual, and kinesthetic applications of math skills and concepts.		
• Software is aligned with the NJCCCS, is effective in improving student performance, and provides students with opportunities for advanced levels of critical thinking, simulation and application of skills.		
• The curriculum applies mathematics across the curriculum in language arts, science, social studies, technology, art and music.		
School culture		
• No student "falls through the cracks" or is "just a number" as at least one teacher, administrator, counselor or other certified professional knows the work and struggles of every student.		
• Students, parents, and visitors are greeted with respect in a safe, clean, and hospitable environment .		
• School rules, procedures, and operations are designed to support students, not penalize them.		

Revising the School Three-year Operational Plan

It is essential that the SLC plan for the years 2004-05 and beyond document the evidence for the diagnosis of student performance and the revisions proposed to improve it. Revisions must also reflect the knowledge gained from the teacher surveys. The revised plan should be consistent with the plans required by NCLB and include specific goals for improved student achievement that are simultaneously ambitious and credible. The goals should be tied directly to the evaluation of longitudinal and disaggregated student achievement results collected on the DOE's Excel spreadsheet, Access database, or the school's own form.

Here again, the work already completed for consolidated federal funding should provide each school, particularly those that are "in need of improvement," with the framework for revising the three-year plan. Specifically, the NCLB needs assessment, the school improvement plan, and the NCLB performance goals and indicators fit very neatly into what is required for Abbott.

The NCLB needs assessment includes a detailed checklist to report the performance of every NCLB subgroup on state tests. Since the consolidated application was due before 2003 GEPA results were available, each school should update its NCLB analysis to include the 2003 results. The GEPA results include a "cluster" report that permits a school to gauge student performance by the skills and content tested on language arts, math and science. Moreover, schools will benefit from using the federal matrix to analyze the results of other standardized national or district assessments in grades other than the eight, so that a clearer pattern of grade-by-grade,

subgroup-by-subgroup performance emerges. The results of this assessment should be shared with parents and the school so that everyone knows the status of teaching and learning.

The NCLB <u>school improvement plan</u> is the bridge between past performance (i.e. needs assessment) and this year's priorities for improved instructional focus and practice. Each school must not only connect the longitudinal test results broken down for subgroups to specific, research-based improvements, but must also address the collective and individual needs of teachers, and prescribe professional development to strengthen teacher performance. NCLB requires the district and schools to work together to better inform and involve parents in the academic work of their students. Although not mandated, schools should indicate the value added of their WSR model, if applicable.

The revised School Three-year Operational Plan should be very specific about how far the school can go in closing the achievement gaps in math and language arts by each subgroup and with measurable indicators. Here the NCLB format can be used for Abbott with the first four goals applicable to middle schools. Working with the district, each school must indicate its status and set ambitious but achievable goals for 2004-05 with respect to:

1. The performance and goals for all students and each subgroup in attaining proficiency in language arts, math, and science;
2. The performance of English Language Learners, by years in bilingual and/or ESL program, in achieving English proficiency;
3. The percentage of classrooms taught by "highly qualified teachers" as defined by New Jersey for compliance with NCLB; and
4. The creation of learning environments that are safe, drug-free, and conducive to learning.

Charts A, B, and C in the final section must be used to outline the assessment results, performance targets, learning deficiencies/obstacles, and strategies/solutions for the 2004-05 school year.

INCREASING MASTERY OF THE CORE CURRICULUM CONTENT STANDARDS IN HIGH SCHOOLS

Background. In the summer of 2003, Abbott high schools submitted their first three-year plans, which were to be focused on curricular and instructional issues, including the implementation of WSR models. Schools were to submit their plans and goals to NCLB for the current school year on September 30, 2003. If those plans were prepared with broad participation of the faculty and school community and all the reports and analyses were faithfully completed, then much of the background required for this year's revisions to the Abbott three-year plans and preparation of the 2004-05 school budgets will be readily available.

NCLB's second year. NCLB has spotlighted student achievement in New Jersey's public schools. By introducing ten subgroups whose progress on state tests must be measured and reported, NCLB has accelerated attention to Abbott's goal: to give every student a credible chance to master New Jersey's demanding CCCS and to make every third grader a strong reader. This is particularly helpful in focusing on the needs of English Language Learners (ELL) and students classified as disabled (SPED), two groups that represent almost a majority of Abbott students, but whose needs were not specifically addressed in the Abbott decisions.

The department has made every effort to incorporate NCLB procedures, standards, deadlines, and reports into those for Abbott where it can. Because New Jersey's High School Proficiency Assessment (HSPA) is relatively new, high schools have not faced categorization as "schools in need of improvement." Instead, any high school in which at least one of the 10 subgroups did not meet the NCLB-New Jersey standards on either the language arts literacy (LAL) or math subtests of the 2003 HSPA was given a "warning" that a second-year repetition will lead to "in need of improvement" classification with its consequences for school choice and supplemental programs.

"Classroom out" assessment and planning

Improving student achievement is the criterion to be used for evaluating and planning the school's work for this and the next two years and for preparing the school-based budget. This year's planning begins with a careful assessment of how students have performed on state, district or national standardized tests in your school over the past three or four years. This review should be broken out by the NCLB subcategories and by a new category that will report performance for students who have been continuously enrolled in your school for at least three years, called "CES" for "continuously enrolled student." DOE has prepared an Excel spreadsheet to assist with the collection of the required test information, but an Access database can be created instead, or the school can devise its own form, as long as the same information is reported.

Student achievement data are the beginning point in assessing how well students are learning, what obstacles stand in their way to improved performance, what steps the school will take to

eliminate or lower those obstacles, and what specific goals are set for improvement this year and for the next two years and how that progress will be measured. The foregoing sentence is a simple statement of the task ahead for every school that must be completed by December 12, 2003 when plans and a school budget are submitted to the central office. In high schools, this will require that the HSPA scores for 2003 be included.

Remember, the most likely solutions for inadequate student performance are to be found in the recruitment and support for qualified teachers and well-prepared principals, the implementation of a coherent curriculum that is closely aligned with the CCCS, and the constant review of the evidence as to how all these elements are working. These are the teaching and learning issues that should be addressed in October and November by all teachers, the principal and the SLC working together.

Because the classroom is the focus of this year's evaluation and planning, we ask that <u>every teacher</u> complete a checklist. These forms are <u>not</u> to be turned into the central office or DOE, but stay at the school to enrich assessment and planning. Once completed, we ask that teachers in the same department meet to compare their responses. We also ask that the same be done in a faculty meeting of all teachers and the principal. Once these meetings have been held, the principal should share the consolidated results with the SLC to help prepare the revisions to the current three-year plan.

The goal of this teacher survey is not to achieve consensus nor to place blame or point fingers. Instead, the goal is to stimulate a very focused and frank conversation among the educators who are directly responsible for, and knowledgeable about, how well students are working and achieving. Candor and forthrightness are obviously required for this process to work.

The evidence of student achievement. High schools will begin with the evidence already reported for NCLB for student performance on the High School Proficiency Assessment (HSPA) for the year 2001-02, updated for the 2002-03 results by subgroups and continuously enrolled students (CES). For this analysis, the school may use the Excel spreadsheet prepared by DOE, an Access database, or its own form. Whichever is used, the following should be displayed:

- Enrollments from the Application for State School Aid (ASSA) by grade for each year from 1999 through 2003,
- The NCLB-required 9th-12th grade cohort analysis depicting the numbers of ninth grade students four years earlier against the number of graduates four years later for the years 2001-2003,
- The number of high school graduates in the years 2001-2003 with the number graduating via the Special Review Assessment (SRA),
- The HSPA performance by subtest and by NCLB subgroups for each year 2001 through 2003 both by percentage proficient and mean scale score, and
- The 2003 HSPA scores by subtest for all eleventh grade students who had been continuously enrolled in the school for at least three years.

These numbers are essential to a sensible review of student performance. There are other indicators that may be available for analysis that the School Leadership Council (SLC) may want to investigate to gain a clearer picture of how well the school is achieving. For example, the performance of former English Language Learners (ELLs) who exited in 2002 or earlier and took the HSPA as a "general" student can be reviewed against the performance of current ELL students and/or other general students. The mean scale scores of disabled students can be plotted by disability and cluster and contrasted with the statewide averages for all students. The more data that are reviewed, the richer the school profile and revised plans will be.

Teacher's Review of Instruction and Learning

Checklist for High Schools

	Yes	No
Expectations		
• The teacher expects all students to master academic subjects and content that will permit them to attend college.		
• High expectations for all students and faculty are a part of the school culture that includes academic work from the college preparatory curriculum for all students.		
• The curriculum makes clear to teachers what is expected to be covered in their course(s), both as to content and skills.		
• Students are told what is expected of them for each term, unit, test, or assignment and they are given frequent chances to attain the goals set.		
• The number of students taught is manageable and permits careful reviews of each student's work.		
• Even if all students take college preparatory courses, the school gives counseling and concrete opportunities for those not pursuing college to explore vocational, military, and business opportunities.		
Curriculum and instructional materials		
• The teacher knows the NJ Core Content Curriculum Standards that set the academic expectations for the students he or she teaches.		
• The curriculum that is used is carefully aligned to the CCCS and the teacher is able to track curricular goals and benchmarks to specific CCCS.		
• Textbooks are aligned to the CCCS and are supplemented with accessible and aligned instructional materials.		
• The curriculum allows the teacher and students to know how well they are doing in mastering standards as we go along, so that extra attention can be given to those falling behind.		
• The school leadership and central office help the teacher when the content of the curriculum is unfamiliar or difficult for them and their colleagues.		
Professional respect		
• Teachers are given time, at least once weekly, to work with		

	Yes	No
colleagues at grade or department level to share effective practices and discuss individual students.		
• Teachers from a grade or content area were involved in writing the district/school curriculum.		
• Professional development is given a high priority and is designed to deal with problems in the classroom, grade or department, and school.		
• The teacher's performance evaluation is based on adequate observation, is constructive in tone, timely, and fair.		
• The teacher's school/district has a responsive and sensible way to deal with problems that arise with computers in the classroom or lab; software is effective, aligned with the CCCS and the district curriculum, and useful to the teacher in daily teaching.		
Literacy and writing		
• Students read widely, across genres, text that is challenging, motivational and relevant to their experience and lives.		
• Students write about what they read and critique what they and others write.		
• Student writing samples that cover a wide range of assignments are planned, revised and published when the specific purpose of the assignment/writing is achieved (process writing).		
• Students write for a variety of purposes, including, but not limited to response to literature, expository, narrative, research, poetry, persuasive/argumentative, etc.		
• Students review, critique and discuss text and its relevance across all content areas.		
Math		
• The school implements a mathematics program that emphasizes the development of mathematical thinking and building meaning.		
• All students should be given the opportunity to complete successfully the content of Algebra I by the end of ninth grade or by the second year of an integrated high school math course.		
• Math texts and supplemental materials cover the five standards: Number and Numerical Operations, Geometry and Measurement, Patterns and Algebra, and Data Analysis, Probability, and Discrete Mathematics -- and the Mathematical Processes Standard.		
• Students are required to communicate about mathematics, both orally and in writing, to explain their reasoning and to make connections among mathematical strands and the real world.		

	Yes	No
• Students work in a variety of groupings with instruction targeted at meeting or exceeding the NJ CCCS and on the assessed needs of students in relationship to the standards		
• The curriculum includes multiple assessment strategies and benchmarks for measuring progress through each content and processes strand.		
• Students are given regular opportunities to manipulate objects and models to represent mathematical concepts.		
• Learning styles: students are offered choices of real life, auditory, visual, and kinesthetic applications of math skills and concepts.		
• The school uses software that is aligned with NJCCCS, is effective in improving student performance and provides students with opportunities for advanced levels of critical thinking, simulation and application of skills.		
• The curriculum applies mathematics across the disciplines of language arts, science, social studies, technology, art and music.		
School culture		
• No student "is just a number" because at least one teacher, administrator, counselor or other certified professional knows the work and struggles of every student.		
• The school offers opportunities to students not pursuing college to explore vocational, military and business opportunities.		
• Students, parents, and visitors are greeted with respect in a safe, clean, and hospitable environment		
• School rules, procedures, and operations are designed to support students, not penalize them.		

Revising the School Three-year Operational Plan

It is essential that the SLC plan for the years 2004-05 and beyond document the evidence for the diagnosis of student performance and the revisions proposed to improve it. Revisions must also reflect the knowledge gained from the teacher surveys. The revised plan should be consistent with any plans required by NCLB and include specific goals for improved student achievement that are simultaneously ambitious and credible. The goals should be tied directly to the evaluation of longitudinal and disaggregated student achievement results collected on the DOE's Excel spreadsheet, Access database, or the school's own form.

Here again, the work already completed for consolidated federal funding should provide each school with the framework for revising the three-year plan. Specifically, the NCLB needs

assessment and the NCLB performance goals and indicators fit very neatly into what is required for Abbott.

The federal needs assessment includes a detailed checklist to report the performance of every NCLB subgroup on state tests. Since the consolidated application was due before 2003 High School Proficiency Assessment (HSPA) results were fully distributed, each school should update its NCLB analysis to include the 2003 results. The HSPA results include a "cluster" report that permits a school to evaluate student performance by the skills tested on language arts, math and science. Moreover, schools will benefit from using the NCLB matrix to analyze the results of other standardized national or district assessments in grades other than the eleventh, so that a clearer pattern of grade-by-grade, subgroup-by-subgroup performance emerges. The results of this assessment should be shared with parents and the school so that everyone knows the status of teaching and learning.

NCLB does not yet require high schools to submit a "school improvement plan" as a part of its consolidated application. However, each high school should connect the longitudinal test results broken down for subgroups to specific improvements in practices and curriculum, but should also address the collective and individual needs of teachers with tailored professional development to strengthen their performance. NCLB also requires the district and schools to work together to better inform and involve parents in the academic work of their students.

The revised School Three-year Operational Plan should be very specific about how far the school can go in closing the achievement gaps in math, science, and language arts by each subgroup tied to measurable indicators of progress and achievement by year's end. Here the format required for NCLB can be used for Abbott. Working with the district, each school must document its current achievement status and set ambitious but achievable goals for 2004-05 with respect to the following:

1. The performance for all students and each subgroup in attaining proficiency in language arts and math;
2. The performance by English Language Learners in achieving English proficiency;
3. The percentage of classrooms taught by "highly qualified teachers" as defined by New Jersey for compliance with NCLB;
4. The creation of learning environments that are safe, drug-free, and conducive to learning; and
5. A reduction in the dropout rate, and moving to a higher graduation rate.

Charts A, B, and C at the end must be used to outline the assessment results, performance targets, learning deficiencies/obstacles, and strategies/solutions for the 2004-05 school year.

REVISING THE DISTRICT THREE-YEAR OPERATIONAL PLAN

The District Three-year Operational Plan for this school year and beyond will be the subject of a DOE review and face-to-face meeting to assess the capacity of the central office to assist schools in closing the achievement gap for all students. This first plan was to focus on two basic questions:

- How well does the district assist <u>all</u> schools by recruiting highly qualified teachers and instructional leaders; producing a preschool-12 curriculum that is coherent, closely aligned between grades and schools, and fully aligned with the CCCS; assuring a program of professional development that meets the individual and school-wide needs of teachers for mastery of the CCCS and of effective classroom practices; and providing aligned instructional materials, software, and other resources; and
- What special measures does the district take to work effectively with schools that are persistently underperforming when compared to other district schools and schools with similar demographics in other Abbott districts?

Once again, the requirements for district compliance with NCLB and expectations for Abbott districts are closely matched with the consequence that much of what is required for revising the district plan should already have been produced by districts for their recently submitted consolidated application. The goal is the same: to identify the obstacles in the way of all students mastering the CCCS. For NCLB, the district must review the plans for each school individually and lay out the steps to be taken to improve student performance, support teachers to improve their instruction, and more deeply involve parents in the academic lives of their children. The district must submit a unified plan that integrates all federal resources to assist all schools identified as "in need of improvement." All this will accelerate preparation of the three-year plan.

DOE-district review of the District Three-year Operational Plan

Before completing revisions to the plan for the 2004-05 school year and beyond, the DOE will distribute a profile of each district which will be one of the subjects of the review. The profile will be based on the same longitudinal data on student performance by subgroups as provided for NCLB and last spring's planning. The DOE will update the review for NJASK4 results and provide comparative information on how other Abbott schools and districts are performing. Special attention will be given to continuously enrolled students, English Language Learners (ELLs) and special education (SPED) students.

The purpose of this review is to reach an agreement on the revisions most important to the early literacy and CCCS mastery goals, the reasonable but ambitious goals to be achieved, and the integration of all available resource at the classroom level. The quality of the district's assistance to schools, the existence of a coherent preschool to grade 12 curriculum, and professional development plans will be at the heart of the discussion. We hope to base these conversations on

the evidence of achievement and progress. The goal is to reach an agreement that will include the implications for the 2004-05 budget and that should accelerate the process both of budget preparation by the district and approval by DOE.

The following checklist is not a compliance review. It is, instead, an efficient way to get to the fundamental issues involved in providing high-quality instruction. It recognizes the difficulty Abbott districts confront in competing with other districts for talented educators and in developing effective approaches to a student population in rapid flux. The checklist will not work unless it is answered candidly and directly. We do not assume all "yes" answers for any district.

Checklist for District/DOE Review

	Yes	No
1. Highly qualified teachers in every classroom		
• There are no teachers with emergency certificates.		
• There are no permanent substitutes or "19-day subs."		
• Contracts for new teachers are completed by June 1.		
• The district is successful in recruiting for specialties in short supply, i.e. special education, bilingual, ESL, math, science.		
• The DOE seeks alternate route teachers.		
• Professional development is a district-led effort.		
• Professional development is driven by an assessment of student. performance and aligned to the CCCS.		
• Professional development exceeds the state minimum of 100 hours/five years.		
• District policy encourages weekly grade-level and departmental meetings.		
2. Highly qualified principals in every school:		
• Improved student achievement is the leading criterion in the performance assessments of principals.		
• Principals participate in district-organized professional development.		
• Time is built in at least each month for principals to meet professionally and socially.		
• The district brings together principals with similar instructional problems, e.g. growing ELL populations or fourth grade math problems.		
• The district identifies, encourages, and challenges teachers, supervisors, and others who might make strong principals.		
• Principals in schools making inadequate progress are warned, supported, but removed if the trend continues.		
3. A coherent, aligned district curriculum.		
• There is a district-wide curriculum from preschool through twelfth grade.		
• The curriculum is aligned with the NJ CCCS.		
• The curriculum is the subject of continuous scrutiny and revision when		

	Yes	No
necessary.		
• The cluster results on state assessments are screened for curricular alignment.		
• Recently, the district has intentionally reviewed the articulation between the preschool curriculum with the K-3 comprehensive reading program.		
• The district selects the instructional software to ensure its alignment with the district curriculum and the CCCS.		
• The curriculum includes instructional materials selected for their effectiveness with ELL students.		
4. Continuous, rigorous assessment of student work.		
• The district uses an electronic student database, including pre-K students.		
• The district has identified all students continuously enrolled in district schools for three years or more.		
• The district prepares a school-by-school cluster analysis for all state tests, district tests, or standardized national tests and shares it with all schools.		
• The central office sets an example in the review and application of evidence about student work and performance and assists schools to do the same.		
• The district tracks the progress of ELLs, e.g., it reports the percentage of third year ELLs who were proficient on state tests or the proficiency of exited ELLs on state tests two or three years later.		
5. Underperforming schools.		
• The district sets with the principals of underperforming schools interim and annual benchmarks for improvement in instruction and student achievement.		
• The district has conducted an evaluation of the school leadership, has agreed to areas of improvement and effort, and set measurable indicators of progress.		
• The district has conducted an evaluation of each classroom teacher to determine strengths and weaknesses and agreed on a professional development program for each.		
• The district, principal, and SLC have agreed on a plan that complies with NCLB requirements and sets schoolwide goals and indicators for the 2003-04 and 2004-05 school years.		
• There is one central office person responsible for oversight and assistance to underperforming schools.		
6. Service to schools, teachers, and other customers		
• Central office professionals are evaluated on how well they serve the district's "customers."		
The district uses anonymous "customer satisfaction" surveys of principals, a random sample of teachers, and other school-based professionals. If "no" we will initiate such surveys this year.		

	Yes	No
• All textbooks and other instructional materials and supplies are delivered to all schools in advance of school opening.		
• Repair orders for broken windows, graffiti, heating, and other building problems are handled quickly and with as little intrusion on instruction as possible.		
• This school year, no new teachers who had accepted offers were lost to other districts because contracts were not completed in a timely way.		
• A student referred for evaluation by a child study team will be reviewed within twenty days and a diagnosis completed within ninety days.		
• Nutritious, healthy, and tasty food is served for lunch.		

The foregoing indicators begin and end with the longitudinal, disaggregated evidence of student performance.

Budget preparation for 2004-05

As is the case with all other elements of this year's guidance, budget preparation and review for 2004-05 will be driven by the relationship of school and district spending to improvement in student achievement.   Since implementation of the 2004-05 budget policy will not require Supreme Court approval, as it did in each of the last two years, the department expects to approve most budgets during April.

In its July 23, 2003 order, the NJ Supreme Court intensified its attention to the effective and efficient expenditure of Abbott funds. In it, the court directed the department to create a new standard for both "efficiency" and "effectiveness" and establish procedures to review the 2003-04 Abbott proposed noninstructional and central office expenditures. For 2004-05, districts should expect two changes in those efficient and effective standards. First, the standards themselves will be modified, broadened, and strengthened to be more transparent, easier to use, and more uniformly applied. The department is working with a number of outside persons with experience and expertise in these questions and intends to share a draft of its standards with representatives of Abbott districts. Second, the new standards will be applied to all expenditures, including, of course, instructional spending at the school level.

While the new standards for judging efficiency and effectiveness must be in place by February, it is our intent to develop and promulgate them well before then, if at all possible.

Please note that draft school budgets for 2004-05 based on the 2003-04 school budgets are to be prepared by the districts and distributed to schools by November 3. School budgets are to be submitted to the district on December 12, 2003 and to the DOE by January 8, 2004.

Much of the schedule is determined by the date of the Governor's Budget Message which contains state aid recommendations to the Legislature and the statutory February 25, 2004 date for submitting Abbott district budgets to the department. While the court has approved a budget

schedule that permits departmental approval no later than the last business day in May, it is our intention to advance that date for Abbott districts. Districts that submit complete budgets electronically on time and that meet the formal budget guidance the department will provide in February, can expect an approval in April.

There are two additional procedures to consider as the 2003-05 budget planning proceeds. First, the November face-to-face meetings between the department and Abbott districts are intended to sort through both educational and budgetary issues so that there is an earlier and stronger agreement about priorities and revisions. The department will share a student achievement profile for each district in advance of the meeting that will serve as the agenda meeting. We will seek agreement on the strengths and weaknesses in each district's instructional program, the most productive approach to dealing with problems, and the implications for curriculum, professional development, instructional technology and materials, and budgets.

To facilitate both the November meeting and budget preparation, districts should give <u>immediate</u> attention to the requirement for disaggregating student data by those students who have been continuously enrolled in a given school for three or more years, and those that have been continuously enrolled in the district for three or more years (if at more than one school). This category provides a much fairer picture of the contributions made by Abbott schools than other sub groupings that do not reflect mobility. These "continuously enrolled students" or "CES" data are a condition for consideration of supplemental funding requests.

The second important procedure involves the revisions to the School and District Three-year Operational Plans. As indicated in this guidance, revisions this year will be framed by the assessment of longitudinal student performance by subgroups as required by both NCLB and Abbott as a guide to evaluating classroom-, school-and-district-level responsibilities for improved instruction and student achievement. The assessment of what students need in order to be literate and to master the CCCS is the basis for three-year plan revisions and budget requests. The department's review of the revisions will assume that the most likely explanation for instructional problems is classroom-related e.g., teacher preparation, tailored professional development opportunities, instructional materials fully aligned with a coherent district curriculum and the CCCS, school leadership to assist and support teachers, and a central office that creates a clear curriculum and recruits highly qualified educators.

"Classroom out" means that the academic needs of students and the instructional needs of teachers guide the planning for student achievement. This focus will be the signature for the 2003-05 and subsequent budgets.

APPLICATION TO CHANGE WSR MODELS

**APPLICATION FOR IMPLEMENTING AN
ALTERNATIVE WHOLE SCHOOL REFORM DESIGN**

OVERVIEW

Purpose. State regulations pertaining to schools in the Abbott district presume that elementary schools will implement a national model of Whole School Reform (WSR) to assure universal literacy by third grade and attainment of the Core Curriculum Content Standards (CCCS) at every grade level. For eligible schools under certain circumstances, however, a school may apply to the Commissioner, if it decides that Abbott's goals will be achieved better with an alternative WSR design. Schools that want to select another DOE-approved WSR model may use Section B of this application. This document provides the information and the forms for approval of an Alternative Whole School Reform Design and to select a new WSR model.

Literacy and learning. In reviewing applications for the alternative WSR design, the DOE will give greatest weight to evidence that the applicant school has completed a rigorous assessment of student achievement, analyzed the reasons for inadequate performance, and demonstrated the relationship of the proposed alternative WSR design to those findings and prescriptions for improvement. Only alternative WSR designs built on improved student achievement will be considered.

Note that Abbott <u>districts</u> interested in developing a single model for all of their elementary schools should not use this form, but should instead set up a meeting with the Division of Abbott Implementation.

Section B includes the application for schools to select a new WSR model.

In accordance with *N.J.A.C.* 6A:10A, *Improving Learning and Literacy in Abbott Districts,* schools in the following categories are eligible to apply for an Alternative WSR design:

1. <u>High-performing schools</u>, that are schools in which the percentage of general education students attaining proficiency on the Language Arts Literacy (LAL) section of the 2002 Elementary School Proficiency Assessment (ESPA) exceeds the statewide percentage, as may be adjusted by the Commissioner.

2. <u>Schools that did not have a whole school reform (WSR) contract in 2002-03</u> are expected to have reinstated their original WSR model in the current school year. The Commissioner and superintendent will collaborate with the School Leadership Council (SLC) to examine each school without a contract to determine if the school should adopt another WSR model, or if a WSR model is not available that meets its needs, implement an alternative WSR design.

3. Schools and model developers that file a complaint with the Commissioner of Education, asserting failure of the other party to comply with the WSR contract will undergo a review of the issues by the Commissioner with the intent of directing actions required to ensure satisfactory performance of the contract and to determine if the contract should be continued or modified. If performance under the contract is not feasible, the Commissioner may authorize the school to apply for an alternative WSR design.

4. Low-performing schools are those in which 50 percent or more of general education students were not proficient on the Language Arts Literacy (LAL) Section of the 2002 Elementary School Proficiency Assessment (ESPA). These schools will undergo an assessment by a Performance Assessment Team. If the Performance Assessment Team, working with a low-performing school and its central office, determines that satisfactory results cannot be achieved with the current WSR model, it may recommend an alternative WSR design as part of the agreement reached with the school. Once the agreement is approved by the Commissioner, the alternative WSR design may be implemented. The improvement agreement replaces this application.

Alternative Whole School Reform Design Requirements

Below are the requirements for schools to meet in order to be considered for an alternative WSR design.

High-Performing Schools:

1. The school must be on the list of high-performing schools. See www.nj.gov/njded/abbotts for the list of high-performing schools, which the Commissioner will update annually.
2. The department will defer to the superintendent and SLC on the selection of another WSR model or the development of an alternative WSR design.
3. The principal, SLC and superintendent will submit a letter-application to the department indicating if the 2003-04 year will be used to plan or to implement the alternative WSR design. High-performing schools need not submit Form A.
4. If the school intends to implement the alternative WSR design in 2003-04, the school must revise its Three-year Operational Plan to include the following:
    a. The transition from the current WSR model to the alternative WSR design;
    b. The schedule for the introduction of new materials and practices;
    c. The pace, magnitude and nature of the professional development required of the faculty; and
    d. A description of how the alternative WSR design will contribute to increased student achievement.
5. If implementation is to occur in 2004-05, the school must submit all of the information in item four above and document changes in the School Three-year Operational Plan and annual school-based budget.

Schools without a contract in 2002-03:

1. The Commissioner and superintendent will collaborate with the principal and SLC of schools without a contract to assess the following:
   a. Whether the requirements of the original WSR model have been fully and fairly implemented, or whether the school can document the reasons for incomplete implementation;
   b. Whether the model has contributed to early literacy and sufficient improvement in student proficiency on the CCCS;
   c. Whether the philosophy and practices of the WSR model have been fully integrated into the school; and
   d. Whether the conditions essential for sustained school improvement can be achieved by resuming the contract with the previous WSR model.

2. If the evaluation concludes that restoration of the original WSR contract is neither feasible nor desirable for improved student achievement, the school will contract with another approved WSR model. If no other approved WSR model can meet the needs of the school, it may apply for an alternative WSR design, completing Form A to document the following:
   a. That the alternative WSR design is consistent with *N.J.A.C.*6A:10A-3.3(b), the nine elements of whole school reform;
   b. That there is a clear transition plan to the alternative WSR design;
   c. That the alternative WSR design is fully aligned with the district's professional development activities, curriculum, CCCS, goals of early literacy and other district priorities; and
   d. That the school-based budget is sufficient to implement the alternative WSR design.

Schools and WSR model developers that file a successful complaint with the Commissioner and the Chief School Administrator (CSA).

1. The school and superintendent file a complaint with the Commissioner.
2. The Commissioner reviews the complaint and takes whatever steps he deems necessary to resolve the problems raised by the complaint so that satisfactory performance under the contract can be achieved.
3. If the Commissioner determines that satisfactory performance under the contract is not feasible, the school may select another DOE-approved WSR model. If none of the other models meet the school's needs, it may apply for an alternative WSR design.

Schools, other than those designated low- or high-performing, that did not have a contract in 2002-03 or that assert failure by another party to comply with the WSR contract, will have to do the following to terminate the WSR contract:

1. Demonstrate that the requirements of the WSR model have been fully and fairly implemented, or document the reasons for incomplete implementation; that the model has not contributed to sufficient improvement in student achievement; or that the philosophy and practices of the model have been integrated fully into the school;

2. Select a Department-approved WSR model or submit an application for an AWSRD;
3. Ensure that the new WSR model will be consistent with standards-based reform in accordance with *N.J.A.C.*6A:10A-3.3 (a); and
4. Include a transition plan to the new model.

The purpose of encouraging an alternative WSR design for eligible schools is to avoid a "cookie cutter" approach that characterizes some WSR models. The DOE believes that educators at the school and district level are in the best position to gauge the progress of their students and to determine what instructional practices will best respond to their academic needs. Hence, there are no mandatory elements for the alternative WSR design, as long as there is a demonstration that the instructional needs of students have been fully assessed and addressed and that the requirements of the nine elements of whole school reform are included.

Schools must submit the following information with the attached application:

1. Evidence from its revised Three-year Operational Plan that the school community, including all teachers, has carefully and deeply assessed student achievement using state, district, and school measures of performance;
2. A modified school Three-year Operational Plan and annual budget that illustrates how the requirements described in *N.J.A.C.* 6A:10A-3.6 are to be satisfied by the alternative WSR design, which must be approved by the SLC and a vote of the school's certificated staff; and
3. A letter from the superintendent that details how the school will be supported and the role the central office played in developing the alternative WSR design.

The application for an alternative WSR design and selecting a new WSR model should be submitted to your regional center with a copy to **Gordon MacInnes, Assistant Commissioner, Division of Abbott Implementation, New Jersey Department of Education, 100 Riverview Plaza, P.O. Box 500, Trenton, NJ 08625-0500 or by electronic transmission to Gordon.MacInnes@doe.state.nj.us.**

FORM A: APPLICATION FOR AN ALTERNATIVE WHOLE SCHOOL REFORM DESIGN

District: _____ School: _____ Grades: _____

Current WSR Model:_____ Cohort:_____

General Information

1. If approved, the school will implement the alternative WSR design:
   ____this school year _____in 2004-05.

2. Check eligibility:

— The school did not have a WSR contract in 2002-03 and no department- approved WSR model can meet the current needs of the school.
— The school filed a complaint with the Commissioner who determined that satisfactory performance under the contract was not possible and no department-approved WSR model can meet the needs of the school.

3. *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) status:

— Our school has been designated a "school in need of improvement."
   ____Yes ____No
   If "no," our school has received a "warning" that some subgroup(s) did not make adequate progress last year. ____Yes ____No
— If "in need of improvement," our school was cited for not achieving _____of 40 indicators (e.g. for 95 percent test-taking, math, language arts, NCLB subgroups special education students (SPED), etc).
— The percentage of our students categorized as English Language Learners (ELL) is _____and as classified disabled is_____.
— Our school improvement plan required by NCLB is consistent with this alternative WSR design proposal. _____Yes ____No

Student Performance Profile

1. The percentage of our general education students who were proficient or advanced proficient on the New Jersey Assessment of Skills and Knowledge (NJASK4) was _____.
2. The percentage of students continuously enrolled for at least three years in our school achieving proficient or advanced proficient status was _____.
3. Having reviewed the NJASK4 results by cluster, we have concluded that the area of strongest teaching and learning was _____ _____.

4. Similarly, we have concluded that the area of weakest performance by last year's fourth graders was _____.

5. We use standardized tests such as TerraNova for kindergarten, first, second, and third grades.   ____Yes   _____No

    If yes, the percentage of our first graders who were reading on grade level in 2002-03 was _____.

Intensive Early Literacy check

1. We have classroom libraries. ____Yes   _____No

    If yes, the average number of books in our second grade classrooms is _____.

    If we have ELL students, we also have books in their native language. ____Yes ____No

2. All K-3 classrooms are organized around "learning centers" or small-group instruction areas for computers, reading, writing and science. _____Yes _____No

3. All K-3 classes devote at least 90 minutes each morning to a language arts/literacy block of uninterrupted instruction.   _____Yes   _____No

4. Dual language classes are available for ELLs, as appropriate.   ____Yes ____No

Our Alternative Whole School Design Proposal

1. The main reason we seek approval to implement an alternative WSR design is
    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____

2. If implemented, the most striking change that will be noticeable to classroom teachers will be the following:
    _____
    _____
    _____

3. The most striking change that will be noticeable to students will be the following:_____
    _____
    _____

4. The most striking change that will be noticeable to parents will be the following:_____
    _____
    _____

5. The student performance objectives most likely to be achieved by the alternative WSR design are the following:
    _____
    _____
    _____

6. If the design is successfully implemented, we expect the percentage of first grade readers to increase to _____by June 2004 and to _____by June 2005.

7. The following members of the school community were involved in the development of the design (give names and titles):

_____
_____
_____
_____

8. The following members of the central office were also involved in the development of the design, by name and title:

_____
_____
_____

9. The three largest revisions (with amounts) to the school budget required to implement or plan the alternative WSR design are as follows:

_____
_____
_____

10. If approved, we expect to begin professional development for teachers by _____(date) and that approximately _____hours will be required in the first full year of implementation.

11. If applicable, we expect new instructional materials required by the alternative WSR design to be introduced by _____(date).

The following training will be offered to noninstructional SLC members_____
_____

12. Our alternative WSR design is consistent with the nine elements of WSR.
_____Yes   _____No.

13. Which of the elements is not included in the alternative WSR design?

_____
_____

14. How will your school address missing elements?

_____
_____

WSR Model Information

1. We began implementation of the WSR model (date): _____
   Implementation has been continuous?   _____Yes   _____No

2. On a scale of one to 10, with 10 representing full implementation of all WSR model requirements and one no implementation, our level of implementation was ____.

3. The faculty vote to abandon our current WSR model was taken on _____ by a vote of _____ to _____.

4. Our school does not want to continue its WSR model for the following most important reason:

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

5. What other department-approved WSR models did the school reviewed? On what basis did the faculty and/or SLC determine that each model would not address the instructional needs of the students? Provide information for at least three models.

Models	Rationale for not Selecting Model
A:	
B:	
C:	

Signatures:

TITLE	SIGNATURE	DATE
Chief School Administrator		
Principal		
SLC Chairperson		

APPLICATION FOR SELECTING A NEW WSR MODEL

Overview

The same schools that are eligible to implement an alternative WSR design may instead switch to another WSR model, if the principal and SLC conclude that another WSR model best addresses the school's needs. If a school decides to select a new WSR model, it must first consider the models on the department-approved list. See.www.nj.gov/njded/abbotts/resources/. If a school is interested in implementing a WSR model that is not on the department- approved list, it may work with the provider of the model to complete an alternative WSR design application or it may petition the department to add the model to the approved list. The department will review all such requests separately and notify the schools of its decision.

All other schools that do not fall into one of the four categories eligible for AWSRD that are not satisfied with their WSR model may apply to switch to another approved model.   These schools will have to demonstrate that they have made a good-faith effort to implement their WSR models and that the current WSR model is not contributing to improved student performance.

Schools selecting a new WSR model, **except high-performing schools,** should complete and submit Form B to their regional center with a copy to Gordon MacInnes, **Division of Abbott Implementation or by electronic transmission to gordon.macinnes@doe.state.nj.us.**

FORM B: APPLICATION TO SELECT A NEW WHOLE SCHOOL REFORM (WSR) MODEL

District: _____ School: _____ Grades: _____

Current WSR Model:_____Cohort:_____

Check one:

1. _____   Our school did not have a WSR contract in 2002-03 and no department-approved model meets the school's needs.

2. _____ Our school filed a complaint with the Department of Education (DOE) and Chief School Administrators (CSA). The Commissioner determined that satisfactory performance under the contract was not possible .

3. _____ Our school is not satisfied with its current WSR model and wants to select a new WSR model.

Check one and include name of model.
1. Our school is interested in adopting _____from the list of department-approved WSR models:

2. Our school is interested in adopting _____which is not on the department- approved list.

---

3. We reviewed other WSR models. Our faculty and/or SLC determined that each model would not address the instructional needs of the students. Please provide information for at least three models below.

Models	Rationale for not Selecting Model
A:	
B:	
C:	

4. Our school has been implementing **all** components of the WSR model as specified by the WSR developer since _____.

5. We have prepared a list of components of the WSR model which have not been implemented and the reasons why.   _____Yes   ____No

6. We have included statements of the two most important reasons why our school does not want to continue with its WSR model.   _____Yes   ____No

7. We are providing the following evidence to demonstrate that our WSR model has not been contributing to improving student performance. The percentage of students that are proficient and advanced proficient is as follows:

Elementary School Proficiency Assessment (ESPA)/NJ Assessment of Skills and Knowledge (NJASK4)

	Language Arts Literacy			Mathematics		
	Total Students	ELLs	SPED	Total Students	ELLs	SPED
1999-2000						
2000-2001						
2001-2002						
2002-2003						

Grade Eight Proficiency Assessment (GEPA)

	Language Arts Literacy			Mathematics		
	Total Students	ELLs	SPED	Total Students	ELLs	SPED
1999-2000						
2000-2001						
2001-2002						
2002-2003						

8. We are providing evidence from other standardized tests to demonstrate that the current WSR model is not contributing to improved student performance on language arts literacy and mathematics. We have included name of test and year(s) of administration and we have provided subgroup analyses, if available.

Check those that apply:

9. Our new WSR model is consistent with the following nine elements of WSR:
   — Improved student achievement and mastery of the CCCS through standards-based reform at the school level;
   — Assessment, planning, budgeting and implementation of reforms, programs, and services driven by data, including student outcomes, student and school

needs, best practices, national research, and evidence of effectiveness in a similar school context;

— School-based leadership and decision-making;
— Integration and alignment of school-level reforms, programs and services;
— Educational technology;
— Teacher supports;
— A safe school environment;
— Student and family support; and
— Accountability.

10. Our school has made a good-faith effort to implement the requirements of the original WSR model. ___Yes   ___No

11. The faculty vote on the current WSR model was taken on _____ with the following results: ____in favor of retaining the WSR model and ____ in favor of eliminating the WSR model.

12. If approved, we expect to begin professional development for teachers by _____(date) and that approximately _____hours will be required in the first full year of implementation.

If applicable, we expect new instructional materials required by the new WSR model to be introduced by _____(date).

The following training will be offered to noninstructional SLC members_____
_____

Signatures:

TITLE	SIGNATURE	DATE
Chief School Administrator		
Principal		
SLC Chairperson		

REVISION OF SCHOOL THREE-YEAR OPERATIONAL PLAN FOR 2004-05 SCHOOL YEAR

Revision of School Three-year Operational Plan
for 2004-05 School Year

Purpose and Planning Process

This document will be used by principals and School Leadership Councils (SLC) as a step-by-step outline to assess student work, identify obstacles to improved performance, propose the actions to be taken to overcome the obstacles, and to set the benchmarks for monitoring progress during the 2004-05 school year. Completion of this document constitutes a revision to the School Three-year Operational Plan submitted July 15, 2003 to take effect in the 2004-05 school year.

In its guidance document for Abbott schools and districts, *Improving Literacy and Learning*, the Department of Education sets the policies and procedures for "classroom out" assessment and planning. Learning starts and ends with what happens, or should happen, between teachers and students in classrooms. One of the first changes you will note is the requirement that <u>every teacher complete a checklist</u> that is provided as a part of the guidance. These checklists are to remain with the school and are not to be shared with the district or DOE. The purpose of the checklists is to ensure that those educators who are closest to students every day share their perspective in a more systematic way so that the school plan reflects the realities of its classrooms. After each teacher completes the checklist, he/she should take part in a grade-level discussion of similarities and differences with his/her colleagues, and then in a full faculty meeting with the principal. After these discussions, the information should be summarized for the SLC to guide the preparation of a revised three-year plan for 2004-05.

The information in this section should guide the discussions and the revision of the School Three-year Operational Plan.

<u>Schools must submit to the central office and to DOE a revision to their School Three-year Operational Plan for the 2004-05 school year</u>. To update the plan, schools must engage in a two-tiered process that includes the perspective of classroom teachers, and an in-depth analysis of the assessment data. These two processes will serve as the backdrop for revising and implementing the School Three-year Operational Plan for 2004-05.

Intensive Early Literacy

If all students are not strong readers by the end of third grade, schools and districts must assess the literacy program to determine if all the elements of New Jersey's Intensive Early Literacy program have been fully or appropriately implemented. Each elementary school should review those elements and map a specific plan for implementing elements <u>beginning this school year.</u> For example, if read-alouds are not now a part of literacy instruction each morning, then the principal and teachers should determine how this essential practice can be introduced. In the

same way, other elements such as classroom libraries, small learning centers, and continuous assessment of progress should be scheduled for full implementation, but in no case later than the beginning of the 2004-05 school year. You can use Form C to describe the school's intensive early literacy implementation level.

Completing the Revision of the School Three-year Operational Plan

The School Leadership Council, led by the principal, should involve all school staff in the analysis of student performance and teacher perceptions (i.e., checklists for elementary, middle school and high school teachers), identification of learning deficiencies and obstacles to student performance, and the identification of solutions and strategies. The SLC and the principal, after a careful analysis of state and local test results, must establish performance targets for 2004-06. The results of the data analysis should assist in completing Charts A, B and C for both language arts literacy and math.

The district central office must ensure that schools have access to the data listed below to conduct the necessary data analyses.

To revise and update the School Three-year Operational Plan for the 2004-05 school year, each school must analyze the following data:

— Annual school- and district-level data from the state assessment Cycle II reports (1999-2002) and Cycle I from 2003 with percentage of students proficient, advanced proficient and partially proficient for language arts literacy (LAL) and mathematics, disaggregated by total students, special education students, and English language learners (ELL);
— Cluster area mean scores for the school, the district, and the state, disaggregated by the same subgroups in the bullet above;
— English language proficiency levels and exit rates for all ELLs;
— Summary of teacher checklists, identifying especially those areas/components of intensive early literacy that need further development;
— Needs assessment completed for No Child Left Behind (NCLB) by subgroup, including identification of priority areas and Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) performance targets;
— Student attendance;
— Graduation and dropout rates (secondary schools);
— Teacher attrition rates;
— Percentage of highly qualified classroom teachers as defined by NCLB; and
— Results on non-state standardized tests disaggregated by the same subgroups as the state tests.

Step I.   Review the summary of the teachers' checklist. The teachers' checklists for elementary schools, middle schools and high schools are located in the guidance document, *Improving Literacy and Learning.* Review the checklists and use the following questions to guide discussions about the possible causes of learning deficiencies and obstacles. The

conclusions drawn from these discussions should be reflected on Charts A, B and C (located at the end of this document).

1. What components of early literacy are currently being implemented and which are not?

2. What do teachers' responses suggest are possible obstacles to improved student mastery of reading, writing and the other CCCS?

3. Do teachers' responses imply that a closer review of curriculum and materials is needed? Of the professional development plan? Of the school culture?

Step II. **Review and analyze state test results.** It is strongly suggested that the following questions guide the school's discussions related to revision of the School Three-year Operational Plan for 2004-05.

1. After careful analysis and synthesis of the assessment data (1999-2003), what learning deficiencies are revealed? For total students? English Language Learners? Special Education students?

2. How does your **total student population** who take the math and LAL sections compare with other Abbott districts ("special needs") and the state average?

3. How do your **English Language Learners** who take the math and LAL sections compare with other Abbott districts and the state average?

4. How do your **special education** students who take the math and LAL sections compare with other Abbott districts and the state average?

5. What does the analysis of cluster results suggest are schoolwide areas of deficient learning and instruction that must be addressed for total population, ELLs and special education students?

6. What changes in classroom practice, professional development and curriculum are necessary to improve performance of all students?

7. Based on an analysis of state assessment data, English language proficiency and exit rate data, what changes in programs, practice and professional development are needed for ELLs?

8. Based on the results of the state assessment cluster analysis, which of the NJCCCS must be better aligned to classroom instruction/grade-level planning?

9. How does performance on the state tests compare with performance on local or national standardized tests for total population, ELLs, and special education?

10. How is instruction affected by staff attrition rates, number of highly qualified teachers in classrooms, and recruitment procedures for the district?

11.   How does the school explain any upward or downward trend(s) in performance revealed by the data?

12.   What areas of deficiency are best explained and addressed by policies, procedures and practices at the **district level**, those at the **school level**, and those at the **grade/classroom level**—as well as those explained by **more than one** of these?

13.   What other factors, including those that may be distinctive to the school, should be considered in your analysis.

Step Three: Complete Charts A, B, and C, located at the end of this document. After analyzing the teacher survey (i.e., checklist) results, assessment results, and other data, the SLC must complete Charts A, B, and C. These charts should clearly identify the performance targets for the 2004-06 school years, the learning deficiencies and obstacles that stand in the way of improving student performance, and the steps the school will take to eliminate or lower those obstacles.

No Child Left Behind
Incremental Increases in Expectations

This chart contains the New Jersey Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) incremental benchmarks in language arts literacy and mathematics. The figures below represent the percentage of total students (including the disaggregated student subgroups) that scored proficient or advanced proficient. Beginning in 2003-04 school year, the incremental benchmark for the NJ ASK3 will be added. Consider these benchmarks when establishing the school's performance targets.

		2002	2005	2008	2011	2014
Language Arts/Literacy	**Grade 4**	68	75	82	91	100
	Grade 8	58	66	76	87	100
	Grade 11	73	79	85	92	100
Math	**Grade 4**	53	62	73	85	100
	Grade 8	39	49	62	79	100
	Grade 11	55	64	74	86	100

THREE-YEAR OPERATIONAL PLAN TITLE PAGE – FORM A

SCHOOL:	**DISTRICT:**
SCHOOL CODE:	DISTRICT CODE:
CURRENT DATE:	REGION: ___North ___Central ___South
WSR MODEL:_____ Date model initially adopted_____ Newly selected WSR model? __ Newly selected alternative WSR design?___	
APPROVED TITLE I SCHOOLWIDE: __Yes __No NCLB SCHOOL IN NEED OF IMPROVEMENT: __Yes __No	
COUNTY:	COUNTY CODE:
DISTRICT CONTACT:	SCHOOL PRINCIPAL:
DISTRICT CONTACT PHONE:	PRINCIPAL PHONE:
DISTRICT CONTACT FAX:	PRINCIPAL FAX:
DISTRICT CONTACT E-MAIL:	PRINCIPAL E-MAIL:
DISTRICT BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR NAME:	SCHOOL ADDRESS—CITY, STATE, ZIP
DISTRICT BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR PHONE/FAX:	GRADE SPAN OF SCHOOL: Grades ___ - ___ Elementary_____ Middle _____ High School _____
DISTRICT ADDRESS—CITY, STATE, ZIP	TOTAL SCHOOL-BASED BUDGET FUNDS:
Signature of School Principal & Date:	Signature of School Facilitator & Date:
The revised Three-Year Operational Plan has been approved by the SLC of the _____ School.	
Signature of School Leadership Council Chair & Date:	SLC Chair Address:
SLC Phone:	SLC Fax:
School Three-Year Operational Plan and Annual Budget Due Date: District: December 12, 2003 **DOE: January 8, 2004**	

PARTICIPANTS IN THE PLANNING PROCESS
FORM B

School_____

Checklists/Survey

Utilize the appropriate checklists for elementary, middle and high schools located in the guidance, *Improving Literacy and Learning,* to answer the following questions:

Number of teachers in the school	Number of teachers who completed the checklist	Number of teachers participating in grade-level discussions	Number of teachers at full faculty discussion of checklist issues
Explanation for less than 100 percent participation of teachers?			

Indicate which of the following steps was completed:
 — Grade-level meetings were held to discuss the checklist.
 — Full-faculty meeting was held by the principal to discuss the checklist.
 — A summary of consensus areas was prepared for the School Leadership Council.

SLC/Faculty Vote.   **SLC Vote:** Indicate the number of votes for and against adopting the plan by the SLC and the school faculty. Number of SLC members:_____   Number of SLC members voting for adoption of Operational Plan:____   Number of SLC members voting against adoption of the Operational Plan:_____

Faculty Vote: Number of faculty members voting to adopt the Operational Plan:____
Number of faculty members voting against adopting the Operational Plan:_____

Planning Process

Include the names and titles of other individuals who were involved in the planning process. Ensure that plan development involves district-level bilingual/ESL, special education, and NCLB supervisors/directors. Attach an additional sheet, if necessary.

Name	Title	Signature

INTENSIVE EARLY LITERACY IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL
ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS – FORM C

School

This table contains a partial listing of the Intensive Early Literacy requirements. Each elementary school must indicate below the extent of its current implementation of the following components of Intensive Early Literacy and the schedule for achieving full implementation of these components.

Intensive Early Literacy Element	Current Level of Implementation	Schedule for Achieving Full Implementation
Scientifically based reading curriculum that includes motivation, background knowledge, phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension.		
Uninterrupted 90-minute literacy block.		
Read aloud to the whole class daily.		
Reading, computer, and writing learning centers.		
Classroom library with at least 300 books aligned to Core Curriculum Content Standards and the district reading program, including assistive materials for special education students and English Language Learners.		
The district curriculum is aligned with the CCCS and includes citations to the CCCS.		
Kindergarten curriculum is aligned with district's preschool curriculum.		
Teachers receive the assistance they need to employ computers in instruction and they are used daily.		
The district uses standardized tests in kindergarten, first and second grades that permit cluster and item analysis to aid instruction.		
Assessment results are shared with, and explained to, teachers, parents, students, the central office and SLC members.		
A cluster analysis has been completed of the NJASK4 results.		
At least 75 percent of our students can read at grade level by the end of first grade.		
Dual language classes are available for students with a strong background in their native language.		
Exchange visits occur with preschool programs whose "graduates" attend kindergarten and receive information on student work and the preschool curriculum.		

Chart A-LAL   Goals and Strategies for Implementation – 2004-05

TOTAL STUDENT POPULATION

School_____

Subtest <u>LAL</u>   **Check one:**   NJASK4 __   GEPA ___   HSPA __

Indicate your school's baseline data and performance targets in language arts literacy. Consider the relationship between your school's baseline data and the NCLB Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) benchmark. Set your school's performance targets for 2004, 2005, and 2006, with the goal of closing the achievement gaps for all students.

2003 Baseline Data	2004–06 Performance Targets
TOTAL STUDENT POPULATION	
Percent passing LAL:* 2003____%	Percent passing LAL:* 2004 ___ % 2005___% 2006___%

*Percent passing = percentage of students achieving proficiency and advanced proficiency

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After a careful analysis and synthesis of the teacher checklists and the assessment data, what deficiencies/obstacles in literacy have been identified for the total student population? Describe below (a) the learning deficiencies and obstacles that contribute to low student achievement in language arts literacy and(b) the strategies/solutions to be implemented. Add rows as needed to complete the chart for each learning deficiency identified for the total student population.

Learning Deficiencies/Obstacles	Strategies/Solutions 2004-05
TOTAL STUDENT POPULATION	

Explain what type(s) of curriculum/instructional materials and professional development will be needed to address the deficiencies identified with particular emphasis on areas of need revealed in the cluster analyses.

Chart A-MATH   Goals and Strategies for Implementation – 2004-05
TOTAL STUDENT POPULATION

School_____

Subtest Math   **Check one: NJASK4 __   GEPA __   HSPA __**

Indicate your school's baseline data and performance targets. Consider the relationship between your school's baseline data and the NCLB Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) benchmark. Set your school's performance targets for 2004, 2005, and 2006, with the goal of closing the achievement gaps for all students.

2003 Baseline Data	2004–06 Performance Targets
TOTAL STUDENT POPULATION	
Percent passing Math:* 2003____%	**Percent passing Math:* 2004 ___ % 2005___% 2006___%**

*Percent passing = percentage of students achieving proficiency and advanced proficiency

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After a careful analysis and synthesis of the teacher checklists and the assessment data, what deficiencies/obstacles in math have been identified for the total student population? Describe below (a) the learning deficiencies and obstacles that contribute to low student achievement and (b) the strategies/solutions to be implemented. Add rows as needed to complete the chart for each learning deficiency identified for the total student population.

Learning Deficiencies/Obstacles	Strategies/Solutions 2004-05
TOTAL STUDENT POPULATION	

Explain what type(s) of curriculum/instructional materials and professional development will be needed to address the deficiencies identified with particular emphasis on areas of need revealed in the cluster analyses.

Chart B-LAL   Goals and Strategies for Implementation – 2004-05

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

School_____

Subtest <u>LAL</u>   **Check one: NJASK4 __   GEPA ___   HSPA __**

Indicate your school's baseline data and performance targets in language arts literacy. Consider the relationship between your school's baseline data and the NCLB Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) benchmark. Set your school's performance targets for 2004, 2005, and 2006, with the goal of closing the achievement gaps for all students.

2003 Baseline Data	2004–06 Performance Targets
ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS	
Percent passing LAL:* 2003_____%	**Percent passing LAL:* 2004 ____ % 2005____% 2006____%**

*Percent passing = percentage of students achieving proficiency and advanced proficiency

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After a careful analysis and synthesis of the teacher checklists and the assessment data, what deficiencies/obstacles in literacy have been identified for English Language Learners? Describe below (a) the learning deficiencies and obstacles that contribute to low student achievement and (b) the strategies/solutions to be implemented. Add rows as needed to complete the chart for each learning deficiency identified for the ELLs.

Learning Deficiencies/Obstacles	Strategies/Solutions 2004-05
ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS	
EXAMPLE: *Reading subcluster mean score is below district, Abbott and DFG-A for comparable population. Item analysis of TerraNova shows core deficiency in vocabulary.*	**EXAMPLE:** *Provide professional development in reading, emphasizing vocabulary acquisition through utilization of semantic and concept maps. Build background knowledge by aligning oral ESL curriculum to content of reading program.*

Explain what type(s) of curriculum/instructional materials and professional development will be needed to address the deficiencies identified with particular emphasis on areas of need revealed in the cluster analyses.

Chart B-MATH   Goals and Strategies for Implementation – 2004-05

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

School_____

Subtest <u>Math</u>   **Check one: NJASK4 __   GEPA ___   HSPA __**

Indicate your school's baseline data and performance targets. Consider the relationship between your school's baseline data and the NCLB Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) benchmark. Set your school's performance targets for 2004, 2005, and 2006, with the goal of closing the achievement gaps for all students.

2003 Baseline Data	2004–06 Performance Targets
ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS	
Percent passing Math:* 2003____%	**Percent passing Math:* 2004 ___ % 2005___% 2006___%**

*Percent passing = percentage of students achieving proficiency and advanced proficiency

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After a careful analysis and synthesis of the teacher checklists and the assessment data, what deficiencies/obstacles in math have been identified for English Language Learners? Describe below (a) the learning deficiencies and obstacles that contribute to low student achievement and (b) the strategies/solutions to be implemented. Add rows as needed to complete the chart for each learning deficiency identified for the ELLs.

Learning Deficiencies/Obstacles	Strategies/Solutions 2004-05
ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS	

Explain what type(s) of curriculum/instructional materials and professional development will be needed to address the deficiencies identified with particular emphasis on areas of need revealed in the cluster analyses.

Chart C-LAL

Goals and Strategies for Implementation – 2004-05

SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS

School_____

Subtest <u>LAL</u>   **Check one: NJASK4 __   GEPA ___   HSPA __**

Indicate your school's baseline data and performance targets in language arts literacy. Consider the relationship between your school's baseline data and the NCLB Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) benchmark. Set your school's performance targets for 2004, 2005, and 2006, with the goal of closing the achievement gaps for all students.

2003 Baseline Data	2004–06 Performance Targets
SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS	
Percent passing LAL:* 2003____%	Percent passing LAL:* 2004 ___ % 2005___% 2006___%

*Percent passing = percentage of students achieving proficiency and advanced proficiency

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After a careful analysis and synthesis of the teacher checklists and the assessment data, what deficiencies/obstacles in literacy have been identified for the special education population? Describe below (a) the learning deficiencies and obstacles that contribute to low student achievement and (b) the strategies/solutions to be implemented. Add rows as needed to complete the chart for each learning deficiency identified for the special education population.

Learning Deficiencies/Obstacles	Strategies/Solutions 2004-05
SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS	

Explain what type(s) of curriculum/instructional materials and professional development will be needed to address the deficiencies identified with particular emphasis on areas of need revealed in the cluster analyses.

Chart C-MATH   Goals and Strategies for Implementation – 2004-05

SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS

School_____

Subtest <u>Math</u>   **Check one: NJASK4 __   GEPA ___   HSPA __**

Indicate your school's baseline data and performance targets. Consider the relationship between your school's baseline data and the NCLB Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) benchmark. Set your school's performance targets for 2004, 2005, and 2006, with the goal of closing the achievement gaps for all students.

2003 Baseline Data	2004–06 Performance Targets
SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS	
Percent passing Math:* 2003____%	**Percent passing Math:* 2004 ___ % 2005___% 2006___%**

*Percent passing = percentage of students achieving proficiency and advanced proficiency

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After a careful analysis and synthesis of the teacher checklists and the assessment data, what deficiencies/obstacles in math have been identified for the special education population? Describe below (a) the learning deficiencies and obstacles that contribute to low student achievement and (b) the strategies/solutions to be implemented. Add rows as needed to complete the chart for each learning deficiency identified for the special education population.

Learning Deficiencies/Obstacles	Strategies/Solutions 2004-05
SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS	

Explain what type(s) of curriculum/instructional materials and professional development will be needed to address the deficiencies identified with particular emphasis on areas of need revealed in the cluster analyses.

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

- *School Three-year Operational Plans are due to NJDOE January 8, 2004.*

- *Districts using EdSolution services may submit their forms and charts for the revised plan online. With online submission, one hard copy must be submitted to their respective Office of Program Planning and Design (OPPD) regional office. Teacher checklists can be completed anonymously online via EdSolution or any other provider used by the district.*

- *Schools using other providers or an internal system must submit one copy of their forms and charts to their respective OPPD regional office.*

- *Copies of the Application for Implementing an Alternative Whole School Reform and Selecting a New Whole School Reform Model should be sent to your regional center and to Gordon MacInnes by electronic transmission at **Gordon.MacInnes@doe.state.nj.us**.*

- *Note: Individual teacher checklists need <u>not</u> be shared with the district central office or with DOE.*

Office of Program Planning and Design Regional Offices

Office of Program Planning & Design **Northern Region** **240 South Harrison Street** **East Orange, NJ 07018**
Office of Program Planning & Design **Central Region** **240 West State Street, PO Box 500** **Trenton, NJ 08625**
Office of Program Planning & Design **Southern Region** **1492 Tanyard Road** **Sewell, NJ 08080**

November 6, 2003